

of its reality depart widely from those of the symbol of professions.

There are gaps, of course. I missed most of all a more extended discussion of education for professional ethics. But my hope is that there will be many more volumes of studies on professional education. And I hope that they in their way will be as good as this one is in its way.

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The Critics of Public Education

RAYWID, MARY ANNE. *The Ax-Grinders: Critics of Our Public Schools*. NEW YORK: MACMILLAN, 1962. viii + 260 p. \$5.00.

This popular version of a commendable research project, originally incubated and delivered as a doctoral dissertation, contains much valuable information about irresponsible critics of public education, their activities and their associates, the sources of their financial support and the causes and typical effects of illegitimate criticism and advice. It is of limited worth, however, on how to preclude or confine and deal with such criticism. It ranks high as a factual and well reasoned study but considerably lower on "prevention-and-cure" proposals.

Dr. Raywid obtained information primarily from published materials; the files of the National Education Association's National Commission for the Defense of Democracy Through Education (now the National Commission on Professional Rights and Responsibilities); and a "loaded" questionnaire which was sent to almost three hundred of a claimed total of approximately one thousand arch critics of public education.

Incidentally, proof that the sample chosen or that the eighty-three respondents are representative is lacking, but the list of respondents and the summary of their answers indicate that they are primarily of the irresponsible ilk.

In answering the twenty-three questions, all of which began with the phrase, "Is the situation in public schools generally undesirable with respect to . . ." and ended with such items as "too little emphasis on subject matter" and "too much money spent

on schools," 36 per cent of the respondents indicted public education. Only 24 per cent cleared the schools on at least half the charges, and the over-all ratio of "guilty" to "innocent" responses was about twelve to one. Moreover, twenty-eight respondents reported 114 indictments without claiming any investigation of the issues concerned. The curriculum and costs ranked highest as targets; teachers and religion, lowest.

With the possible exceptions of school costs and religion, two general themes account for all irresponsible criticism: the schools are "in some manner subversive" and "they are anti-intellectual in purpose or effect or both." Although Dr. Raywid holds that these types are usually intermingled, she does recognize that the un-Americanism approach was predominant in the late forties and early fifties and that the anti-intellectualism theme took over about 1954. Attacks on the Tenafly, New Jersey, and Montgomery County, Maryland, public schools are described to illustrate the two respective types.

The rules developed for distinguishing between legitimate and illegitimate critics are "rules of evidence, democracy, and common decency." In terms of these somewhat subjective yet defensible criteria, the Council for Basic Education, for example, becomes a definitely suspect organization.

Evidence is adduced to show that much financial support for irresponsible criticism comes from sources that represent a highly conservative social-political-economic viewpoint. Causes of invalid criticism are explored, and the conclusion is reached that differences in values and the educator's lack of power are comprehensively explanatory.

Establishment of active citizen groups as fact-finding organizations is the major proposal for precluding or limiting and dealing with irresponsible criticism. Political approaches are mentioned in a half-hearted manner. Although the lay participation approach lacks depth, it is basically sound, since, as Dr. Raywid so wisely says, in the long run, the answer to invalid criticism of public education must come from the American people.

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